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MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Reconnaissance, CIA

SUBJECT: NRO Staff

REFERENCE: Draft on the NRO Staff dated 20 December 1965

1. I have reviewed the reference document and after considerable thought have decided that my comments should be general in nature. My reason for this is that where a specific controversy may exist, it is implicitly an extension of both the basic concept of the staff/line function and the size of the proposed staff. If you accept these conditions, then disagreements are minimal. However, I do not accept either situation.

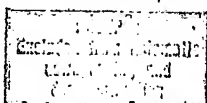
2. I would like to preface my remarks by expressing some concern that a discussion on the new NRO staff is somewhat premature. I fully recognize that you must start somewhere in implementing the NRO Agreement, however I do not think it should be with the NRO Staff. I suggest that the first order of business should be the defining, rather precisely, of the functions and responsibilities of the Directors of Reconnaissance of the various participating agencies and departments and their respective Program Directors. From this then would come the requirement, in terms of size, and the functions and responsibilities necessary for effective staff support of the D/NRO.

3. It came as somewhat of a surprise to learn that the NRO Staff is both a "staff" and "line" organization. I agree that any commander or director needs a staff organization to keep him advised and carry out normal "staff" functions. However, for this staff to function as part of the line organization is inconsistent with good management practices. It will at the very least establish another level of bureaucracy through which you and the Program Directors must wade before reaching the decision-making level.

4. If it is acceptable that a "staff" cannot function in the line organization then I would point out that the mere size of the proposed

NRO review(s) completed.

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staff is overwhelming and its responsibilities and function are of an equal magnitude. My major concern is that we are continuing to move in the direction of the normal DOD approach to Program Management. If we continue along this line, it is my opinion that the NRO will soon flounder in its paperwork and echelons of bureaucracy, and one of the primary reasons for its existence will be lost in the process. Certainly there must be an NRO Staff, however, in the same instance it should not be the repository for all things. For example, much of what has been outlined as their responsibilities and functions are now and should continue to be within the purview of the participating agencies and departments.

5. On the plus side, I feel that the referenced paper does indicate a serious weakness in the past organizational structure of the NRO; and in doing so, quite properly lays partial cause for this on the lack of CIA participation in the manning of the NRO. In manning a "modest" NRO Staff this Agency certainly has no alternative but to actively participate and would be seriously remiss if it did not do so. This is true if for no other reason than to protect our own vested interest and to share equally in the voice of the NRO. In this context, I would strongly recommend that it be a complete coalition staff and we have representation at the Director or Deputy Director's level, and certainly as Director of Research and Development.

6. In summary, I would caution again that the NRO Staff be a "modest" one and that CIA's participation be in concert with this approach but none the less be a major contributor to its competency.

(Signed) Jack C. Ledford

JACK C. LEDFORD  
Brigadier General, USAF  
Director of Special Activities

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DRAFT 20 Dec, 1965

THE NRO STAFF

1. The NRO Staff, despite its title, is both a "staff" and a "line" organization. It is "staff" in the sense that it assists and advises the DNRO in his management of the National Reconnaissance Program, assists field elements who participate in the NRP, and provides NRO liaison with numerous Government agencies. It is "line" (i.e., exercises a form of command) in areas such as satellite operations, film processing and production, certain aspects of security and communications, etc.

2. When originally conceived, the NRO Staff was established as purely a service organization--service in the sense of assisting the DNRO, as he required, and assisting the field Program Directors in the accomplishment of Washington tasks related to their assigned responsibilities. The concept then envisaged the delegation of most satellite matters to one field Program Director and aircraft matters to another, with the DNRO personally exercising rather detailed direction.

The NRO Staff, at the outset, focused most of its attention on satellite matters, since the satellite Program Director was located in California and the aircraft Program Director in the Washington area.

3. Subsequent to the formal establishment of the NRO, the NRP has grown considerably in scope and complexity. Many more Government agencies and persons are now involved in the program--in its planning and preparation, review and coordination, and implementation. The DNRO has looked increasingly to the NRO Staff for detailed project and program analyses, and for the close monitoring of the implementation of approved projects and programs.

4. The NRO Staff has been intentionally kept quite small. As of this date, it is authorized  officer/civilian personnel, of which, some 45 percent of whom are involved in operating the Satellite Operations Center. Attached as Tab A is the present NRO Staff organization, indicating its principal functions, key personnel, professional and support personnel authorizations, etc. Pending a possible augmentation of CIA personnel, these are the total manpower resources available to the NRO Staff.

5. In its present environment, the NRO Staff appears to have several possible organizational weaknesses and deficiencies in available technical skills. The major concerns appear to be as follows (with no particular order of priority implied):

a. A potential conflict exists between the Satellite Operations Center (SS-4) and Satellite Systems (SS-6) in the areas of scheduling and quasi-technical matters pertaining to CORONA, [ ] and SIGINT payloads.

b. A potential conflict exists between the Advanced Planning Office (SS-7) and Satellite Systems (SS-6) in technology and system R&D matters.

c. There is a lack of technical expertise in the Satellite Operations Center on the CORONA [ ] systems. 25X1

d. Manpower surveys indicate that SS-4 may not be utilizing all resources to their maximum advantage. Communications and rapport with COMOR and the Air Force Office of Special Projects (SAESP), in California, have not always been at the level desired by the Staff Director.

e. Insufficient personnel are assigned to SS-7 (Advanced Planning) and SS-5 (Policy) to keep abreast of all responsibilities.

f. Insufficient people are assigned to the Office of Aircraft Systems (SS-8)--namely, one officer--to do the job.

g. There is a lack of clear-cut assignment of responsibility for and/or the coherent assignment of various support functions such as the STC operation, programming, etc.

h. There are no CIA technical (R&D) personnel assigned to the Staff [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

6. Despite the statements of insufficient people in three areas, the NRO Staff does not appear to require great numbers of additional people. There presently are two AF Officer vacancies; an Army Officer (mapping and charting) comes aboard in December; the Navy would provide another officer (and billet) if requested; and presumably, NPIC eventually will replace their previous representative. An additional

[REDACTED] CIA technical (R&D) people, plus a steno, should provide an adequate Staff. Also, it is believed that increased productivity can be realized out of existing manpower resources by regrouping and realigning people and functions.

7. In considering various possible organizations for the NRO Staff, it is recognized that there are an almost infinite number of ways to group functions and responsibilities. The current Staff Director prefers the smallest possible number of homogeneous groupings--it gives him fewer supervisors to work with; and he believes it will strengthen the individual offices.

8. Attached as Tab B is one possible reorganization of the NRO Staff. It allocates all presently available manpower resources plus an augmentation, and notes thereon the areas where it is believed these additional CIA technical personnel should be added (see paras 10-12 for further discussion).

9. Attached as Tab C are the functions--in some detail--which go along with the possible revised Staff organization. This includes all present functions and responsibilities plus certain modifications in accord with the 11 August NRP Agreement.

10. Note that it is proposed to add  CIA technical personnel to the Research and Development Office. One of these would be either the Director or the Deputy (these two



positions essentially are the same from a qualification stand-point). This person should be a GS-15 or 16, and have a broad R&D background since he would deal with all R&D matters in the NRP (airplanes, satellites, cameras, radar, etc--from studies through Applied Research, to systems development); he should be more "space" than airplane oriented and have a background in electronics or physics. The [ ] CIA technical personnel would become staff project officers; they should be GS-12's to 14's; [ ]

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[ ] At a future date, as presently assigned personnel complete their tours, it is anticipated that other CIA skills would be added.

11. Note also that it is proposed to add 1 CIA technical man in the Policy and Resources Office. This person should be a GS-12 to 14, experienced in film processing/production/interpretation (this could be an NPIC representative); and he would also be used as a general purpose project officer in planning and programming.

12. Note finally that it is proposed to add 1 CIA Operations Officer to the Operations Office. This person should be a

GS-12 to 14, experienced in some aspect of satellite SIGINT matters (the current SIGINT Operations Branch includes one NSA, one Navy, and one AF officer).

Attachments

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Approved For Release 2004/05/13 : CIA-RDP75B00326R000300050009-9

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NRO STAFF FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Director/Deputy Director NRO Staff:

a. Responsible to the DNRO/DDNRO for all activities of the NRO Staff.

b. Included are the following authorities and responsibilities which cannot be further delegated:

(1) Authority to sign requests for overflight approvals to the 303 Committee for and/or in the absence of the DNRO/DDNRO.

(2) Authority to sign correspondence to SECDEF, NRP EXCOM, USIB, etc., for and/or in the absence of the DNRO/DDNRO.

(3) Authority to sign program/project directives to NRP participants for and/or in the absence of the DNRO/DDNRO.

(4) Authority to coordinate on  directives to SAFSP for and/or in the absence of the DNRO/DDNRO.

(5) Authority to approve need-to-know for access to  information for clearable persons.

(6) Establishment of specific satellite launch dates, orbital envelopes, and targetting concepts.

2. Responsibilities of the Executive Officer (SS-2):

a. Office Management. Assists the Director, NRO Staff, in over-all office management. Evaluates policies and procedures;

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*Tab C*

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recommends management improvements to the Director and implements, as directed.

b. Manpower and Personnel Services. Advises and acts for the Director, NRO Staff on staff manpower requirements and personnel matters.

(1) Takes key manpower and manning actions for the Director, NRO Staff and the Director, Special Projects (SAFSP).

(2) Handles SAFSS and SAFSP/AFSC personnel control rosters.

(3) Provides and staffs a reception area for SAFSS.

c. Administrative Services. Provides administrative services for the NRO Staff, including:

(1) Preparation of presentation aids.

(2) Control, handling, processing (for distribution and accountability) of all incoming and outgoing correspondence.

(3) Records storage.

(4) Posting of destruction certificates for classified material destroyed by all elements of the NRO Staff.

(5) Establishes and maintains NRO and NRO Staff policy directives and administrative procedures, consistent with direction of the Director, NRO Staff.

3. Responsibilities of the Chief Security Officer, NRO Staff (SS-3):

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- a. Advises the Director, NRO of all matters having a significant impact on NRP security.
- b. Acts on behalf of the DNRO to insure implementation of NRP security policy by the NRO Program Directors and participating U.S. Government agencies and departments.
- c. Is the principal NRO Staff member on all matters referred by the DNRO for consideration or action, using the investigative and security facilities of the DOD, Military Departments, CIA, and NRO Program Directors, as required.
- d. Appraises for the DNRO recommendations of the NRO Program and Project Directors and participating agencies on matters affecting NRP security, requesting guidance of the Director of Security, CIA, when conclusions require an amplification or clarification of existing basic NRO security policy.
- e. Interprets NRO security policy and criteria as required by NRP participants and participating agencies for detailed application to operating procedures.
- f. Insures a high level of NRO facility security. Requests inspections, as required, by the Director of Security, CIA, to insure that operating procedures are in accordance with the NRO security policy.
- g. Reviews and makes appropriate recommendations to the Director, NRO Staff, re "must-know" for NRP special project access for those individuals who are not directly under the organizational or contractual jurisdiction of NRO Program Directors.

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h. Conducts regular status briefings for the benefit of the Director of Security, CIA, or his designated representative - the Chief, SSC/CIA - on matters affecting the security of the program.

i. Establishes and oversees NRO procedures for review of public news media (domestic and foreign) and intelligence sources of information affecting program security. Evaluates such information and recommends action.

j. Provides Secretariat services for the Inter Agency Contingency Planning Committee, and serves as the NRO member of the ICPC Working Group.

k. Provides support and assistance as required to the Director of Policy and Resources on cover and contingency planning matters.

4. Responsibilities of the Deputy for Operations (SS-4):

a. Intelligence Collection Requirements: SS-4 is assigned the following specific responsibilities:

(1) Provides the nominal NRO consultant to the COMOR (serving as the NRO Ex-Officio Member of COMOR). Keeps the COMOR and its subsidiary working group structure informed on the intelligence collection capabilities of satellite reconnaissance systems in order to provide and maintain the understanding necessary for them to specify over-all collection requirements and priorities.

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(2) Through daily liaison with the Washington intelligence community, maintains currency with changes in intelligence targets of interest, and changes in target priorities, in order to assure the best possible collection response by the satellite reconnaissance program.

(3) Conducts analyses of photo and SIGINT intelligence collection requirements and priorities and compares collection requirements with planned collection capability, to serve as a basis of NRO program planning to meet these requirements.

(4) Conducts climatology studies of areas of intelligence collection interest. Combines climatology analyses with photographic collection requirements analyses and recommends photographic satellite mission schedules to the Director, NRO Staff.

(5) Conducts analyses of the extent of collection realizable from orbiting SIGINT satellites. Combines with SIGINT collection requirements analyses and recommends SIGINT satellite mission schedules to the Director, NRO Staff.

(6) Monitors intelligence reports and documents as necessary in order to maintain current knowledge of all areas of intelligence collection interest. Prepares briefings and summaries as necessary to keep the NRO Staff appropriately informed.

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b. Satellite Operations:

(1) Prepares, for the approval of the Director, NRO Staff, Reports Control Manuals to be used for each satellite reconnaissance project. (All manuals will be prepared in similar format, adjusted to each particular project. All manuals will use the term "Satellite Operations Center").

(2) Conducts general pre-mission planning and coordination, including conduct of CPX's.

(3) Schedules and activates all ground, air, and orbital operations of the controlled range network (CORN).

(4) Coordinates, when appropriate to the type mission(s) involved, the satellite reconnaissance missions with activities controlled by other organizations. (Such as peripheral reconnaissance, etc.)

(5) Maintains mission following capability on 24-hour basis.

(6) Maintains approved list of personnel to be notified of satellite reconnaissance operations, develops procedures for such notification, carries out notification procedures as approved by the Director, NRO. All such notifications, other than by wire or memorandum, will be accomplished by officer grade personnel.

c. Satellite Launching Schedules: The official NRO launching schedule will be maintained in two (consistent) parts: a long range schedule, extending ahead for a year or

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more, showing launching or launching availability by month but not by date, and a short range schedule extending ahead for approximately sixty days showing launch pad assignment and planned launch date. SS-4 is assigned the following launch schedule responsibilities:

(1) Analyzes the degree to which mission schedules can be met with existing capability. Determines options within this capability, and summarizes the factors involved in improvements which appear technically feasible. Makes recommendations to the Director, NRO Staff concerning the long range launch schedule. Maintains the official long range NRO launch schedule in accordance with direction received from the Director, NRO Staff. (This is the only long range schedule that will be used, transmitted, or included in any report or briefing by any element of the NRO Staff.)

(2) Recommends to the Director, NRO Staff, the official short range NRO launch schedule. Keeps the NRO Staff currently informed. (This is the only short range schedule that will be used, transmitted, or included in any report or briefing by any element of the NRO Staff.)

(3) Is the only NRO Staff element authorized to inquire into the operational (as contrasted to research and development) schedule status by outgoing message or telephone.

(4) Is the action element of the NRO Staff for all incoming schedule information from any NRO element.

(5) Takes appropriate action to coordinate directed changes in launching schedules, including coordination with the NRO Comptroller when fund implications are involved, and to issue implementing directives.

(6) Maintains current, cumulative account of all changes to long and short range schedules, with explanations. (This is the only account of schedule changes or explanation that will be used, transmitted, or included in any report or briefing by any element of the NRO Staff.)

d. Operations Reports and Analyses. Prepares internal briefing memoranda for the Director, NRO Staff to provide to the Director, NRO prior to each USIB meeting, showing the current schedule, and a brief summary of changes from the previous schedule, with explanation.

e. Satellite Launching Schedules

(1) After completion of pad run and initiation of launching count, submits to the Director, NRO Staff, recommendations for launching date changes for target weather or intelligence reasons, within options permitted by pads, system availability and technical status.

(2) Transmits satellite launching schedule information in accordance with the approved Reports Control Manual for each project.

f. Satellite Missions

(1) Pre-launching responsibilities

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- (a) Specifies desired target coverage.
  - (b) Approves orbit.
  - (c) Specifies desired on-orbit target program options.
  - (d) Approves target program for each photographic mission.
  - (e) Approves read-in/read-out program for SIGINT satellite missions.
  - (f) Specifies desired launch time.
- (2) Post-launching responsibilities
- (a) Maintains mission following appropriate to the particular type of system, monitoring the general health of the system and the remaining collection capability.
  - (b) Makes all on-orbit selection of photographic target options, based on target weather or intelligence factors.
  - (c) Makes and directs all tasking plans for read-in/read-out operations of SIGINT systems, based on power status and intelligence factors. Establishes appropriate emergency tasking plan to assure quick reaction to intelligence reasons for changing tasking.
  - (d) For photographic systems which have completed the developmental phase and have been declared

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operational, changes the mission duration, within the limits permitted by the technical health of the system, based on target weather or intelligence reasons.

(3) Post-Mission Responsibilities

- (a) Monitors the progress of the intelligence take until it has been delivered to the intelligence community customers (NPIC and DIA for photo take, NSA and SAC for SIGINT take).
- (b) Conducts analyses of degree of success of satellite missions, both photo and SIGINT, in regard to target coverage achieved versus target coverage attempted, and collates the results.
- (c) Conducts/participates in post-mission critiques to improve procedures and coordination.
- (d) Maintains cognizance of the orbital status of all satellite reconnaissance vehicles in orbit, and records date and location of re-entry.

g. Aircraft Operations:

- (1) Maintains knowledge of all operational (as contrasted to research and development) aircraft available for

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overflight operations, to include inventory, technical status, and location of these aircraft and knowledge of their systems and capabilities.

(2) Maintains cumulative and current knowledge of all aircraft overflight operations for ready reference by the Director, NRO, to include hours flown, in-commission rates, and utilization factors.

(3) Maintains knowledge of the inventory, technical status and capabilities of all photographic and SIGINT payloads available or being developed for NRO aircraft use, including warning and countermeasure equipment.

(4) Maintains close liaison with the Joint Reconnaissance Center (JCS) and the Office of Special Activities (CIA).

h. Other Responsibilities:

(1) Conducts cumulative analyses of target coverage obtained and collates with USIB collection requirements.

(2) Recommends to the Director, NRO Staff changes in collection capability which would be desirable, with supporting analyses relating the proposed improved collection capability to USIB collection requirements.

(3) Serves as the responsible NRO Staff element for emergency action due to re-entry of a satellite reconnaissance vehicle in a location likely to provoke undesirable reaction or disclosure.

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(4) Is responsible for destruction of classified material for [ ] and for publication and control of operations Reports Control Manuals.

5. Responsibilities of the Deputy for Policy and Resources

(SS-5):

a. Policy and Planning:

(1) Is the responsible NRO Staff element for all State Department, UN, ACDA, NASA (other than specific technical projects), DOD and JCS relationships and matters of concern to the NRO.

(2) Is the responsible NRO Staff element for all Congressional and Executive Department relationships and matters of concern to the NRO.

(3) Is the responsible NRO Staff element for all public information problems of concern to the NRO.

(4) Maintains current knowledge of all cover and contingency plans for all NRO projects.

(5) Is responsible for all general policy matters of concern to the NRO and for specific policy matters as assigned.

(6) Conducts and supervises broad planning studies, as assigned.

b. Programs and Resources:

(1) Provides working interface between the NRO Staff and the NPIC.

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(2) Provides working interface between the NRO Staff and the DIA.

(3) Directs the preparation, collation and distribution of all status and progress reports on the NRP, per se.

(4) Maintains a current analysis of the status of NRO program and procurement schedules.

(5) Directs the provision of Air Force support for NRO aircraft and satellite operations.

(6) Assists and/or collaborates with the NRO Comptroller as required.

c. Film Production/Processing/R&D:

(1) Maintains knowledge of the current capabilities of all photographic processing facilities used in whole or part by the NRO.

(2) Coordinates the production activities and determines and assigns the production workload of the NRO processing laboratories at Eastman and at Westover AFB (AFSPPF), meeting the priorities established by the USIB through the most efficient utilization of these combined facilities. Follows USIB determination of the relative priorities of individual recipients or groups of recipients receiving duplicate positives and negatives. Makes arrangements for other government-owned laboratories to assist in the production of duplicates during periods of temporary overloading of the Eastman and AFSPPF facilities.

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(3) Coordinates the assignment of certain NRO photographic processing and printing to appropriate overseas locations when required by the tactical situation.

(4) Monitors closely the entire needs of the NRO for photographic film, equipment and processing, and assures that appropriate actions are taken to meet these needs. Establishes planning factors for production quantities and reserve supplies.

(5) Maintains knowledge of and assists in the technical management of all processing and printing technology research and development work supported by the NRO. (Management assistance will be in accordance with DNRO memo of 23 May 1963 -

[REDACTED]

(6) Coordinates (with SAFSS-4 and NRP participants) the establishment and use of a system of ground and airborne targets and an associated communications and instrument network (CORN) to obtain data to assist in the evaluation of satellite and aircraft camera systems.

(7) Maintains current knowledge of all photographic processing and printing research and development items and all photographic film, chemicals and supply items in the NRO budget in sufficient detail to explain and justify throughout the budget cycle.

d. Communications:

(1) Insures that the Director, NRO Staff, is advised of all matters having a significant impact on NRO communications.

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(2) Provides the principal NRO Staff action on all communications matters referred to the DNRO for consideration or action.

(3) Plans and programs communications services to meet NRO requirements, as required and directed. In carrying out these duties coordinates closely with Hq USAF, Hq AFCS, and major air commands to arrange: leasing or procurement of circuits and equipment; and provision of manpower authorizations and properly cleared/trained personnel to operate and maintain NRO communications facilities.

(4) Supervises communications security for USAF-operated NRO communications facilities, developing a high level of security consciousness, knowledge, and discipline at each communications center.

(5) Interprets NRO communications security policy and criteria for detailed application to operating procedures.

(6) Establishes regular inspections of Air Force operated NRO communications facilities to insure operating procedures are in accordance with security policy. Reports results of these inspections to the Director, NRO Staff.

(7) Provides semi-annual briefings for the Director, NRO Staff, on the overall status of, and plans for, the NRO communications network.

6. Responsibilities of the Deputy for Research and Development (SS-7):

a. Under the Director, NRO Staff, the primary responsibilities of this office are:

(1) Assists the DNRO to plan and execute a program of research, study, development, and production of components and systems to support the gathering of image and signal intelligence by overflight of denied territory.

(2) Insures that the NRO employs all resources available to it, each to its best usefulness, in support of this planning function.

(3) Insures that decisions by DNRO to undertake new developments are made in the light of the best available knowledge of technical possibilities and requirements, and are made against criteria which fully reflect both national policy and the need to make efficient and economical use of all resources.

(4) Maintains a current analysis of the status of applicable technical knowledge and of the status of all significant relevant studies, research, and development activities that are conducted by the NRO, by elements of the DoD and the CIA not normally considered part of the NRO, or by other agencies from which information may be available.

(5) Maintains a current projection of the technical requirements that may be expected to govern the development of future systems for gathering intelligence by overflight of denied areas.

(6) Maintains a current analysis of the technical requirements imposed by the needs of the intelligence community upon systems in current use in the NRP.

(7) Maintains a current analysis of the performance of current systems against existing and projected technical requirements, and of the technical problems encountered by these systems.

(8) Analyzes for the DNRO the plans and programs of the NRO Program Directors and reviews and analyzes such proposals for new studies or developments as may be submitted to the DNRO.

(9) Conducts such other studies and analyses as the DNRO may direct.

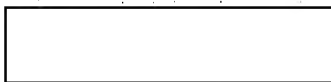
(10) Recommends to DNRO such plans and actions as are found necessary to improve the quality and economy of the NRP, and to improve its responsiveness to national needs.

(11) Assists in guiding and planning (but is not responsible for conducting) the research and development program.

(12) Conducts basic analyses as required to carry out assigned responsibilities. (However, the execution of planning studies calling for significant effort will be assigned by the DNRO as tasks to appropriate Program Directors or to other agencies, under guidance approved by the DNRO.)

(13) Is responsible for knowing the technical status of all NRO projects which are in the research and development stage (as determined by the DNRO). Furnishes schedule

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information on such projects, as required, to SS-4.

(14) Maintains current knowledge of photographic exploitation needs for technical data; prepares documents containing such data on each NRO photographic system for use by the exploitation community within the product security clearance.

(15) Monitors the technical analysis of photographic satellite results (PET activities).

(16) Maintains current knowledge of the scope and intent of each NRO research and development project budget item, including requirements for new construction (MCP), in order to provide appropriate technical explanation and justification during the budget cycle.

(17) Performs technical liaison with the AF, Army, Navy R&D community and DDR&E.

(18) Performs technical liaison on R&D matters with NASA.

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